Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TRIPOL 00399 151545Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-08 /019 W
----------120404 160251Z /66
R 151500Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
TO USDA FAS WASHDC
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 5274
USDOC WASHDC
AMEMBASSY RABAT

UNCLAS TRIPOLI 0399

RABAT FOR AGATT

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: EAGR, LY
SUBJECT: AGRICULTURAL TRADE OPPORTUNITY

1. EMBASSY HAS RECEIVED REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE IN LOCATING U.S. SUPPLIER(S) WHO COULD PROVIDE ONE MILLION DATE-PALM SAPLING PLANTS FOR SHIPMENT TO LIBYA. PREFERRED VARIETY IS "DEGLET NOUR" AND PLANTS SHOULD BE 20 TO 24 MONTHS OLD BUT BUYER OPEN TO SUGGESTIONS OF SUPPLIER ON MOST SUITABLE AGE. PLANTS WOULD BE USED IN GOVERNMENT LAND RECLAMATION PROJECTS IN VARIOUS PARTS OF LIBYA. ACCORDING TO INQUIRER, PREFERRED TRANSPLANTING TIME IN THIS AREA IS FROM MARCH TO OCTOBER, THUS SHIPMENTS COULD BE COMMENCED SOON. PRICE QUOTATION CIF TRIPOLI IS DESIRED. INQUIRER SENT LETTER MARCH 13 TO CALIFORNIA DATE GROWERS ASSOCIATION IN LOS ANGELES MAKING KNOWN HIS WISHES.

2. INQUIRER IS ENGINEER HUSSAIN BARHUM, AL-FASSI CO., P.O. BOX 8288, TRIPOLI, TELEPHONE 42503. HE IS ASSOCIATED WITH A LIBYAN NAMED ABDELJELIL EL FASSI, IN A SMALL FIRM WHICH THEY DESCRIBE AS "GENERAL CONTRACTOR, IMPORT, EXPORT."
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PAGE 02 TRIPOL 00399 151545Z

3. FYI. EMBASSY OFFICERS VISITED BARHUM AND EL FASSI IN THEIR OFFICES AFTER RECEIVING TELEPHONE INQUIRY MARCH 13. BARHUM IS A PALESTINIAN PETROLEUM ENGINEER WHO FORMERLY WORKED FOR THE LIBYAN NATIONAL OIL COMPANY. THE FIRM APPEARS TO HAVE LITTLE INFRASTRUCTURE AND TO PLAY THE ROLE OF MIDDLEMAN FINDING GOODS AND SERVICES

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NEEDED BY OTHERS. EMBASSY HAS NO PRIOR KNOWLEDGE OF THE FIRM OR ITS PRINCIPALS, IS UNABLE TO VOUCH FOR ITS REPUTATION, AND SUGGESTS THAT POTENTIAL SELLERS EXERCISE DUE CAUTION. WE NOTE HOWEVER THAT MUCH BUSINESS IN LIBYA IS STILL DONE BY SUCH FIRMS.

4. ACTION REQUESTED: EMBASSY BELIEVES THIS CASE WARRANTS TELEPHONE CALLS BY FAS TO LOCATE POTENTIAL SUPPLIERS OF DATE-PALM SEEDLINGS AND PUT THEM IN CONTACT WITH LIBYAN FIRM. WE ASSUME THAT ONE MILLION SEEDLINGS WILL NOT BE AVAILABLE ANYWHERE AND THAT SMALLER VOLUMES COULD BE NEGOTIATED.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TRADE, INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES, PLANTS (FLORA)
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 15 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978TRIPOL00399
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780116-0449
Format: TEL
From: TRIPOLI
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780363/aaaacbna.tel
Line Count: 75
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 19374bc6-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 mar 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3317692
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: AGRICULTURAL TRADE OPPORTUNITY
TAGS: EAGR, LY
To: AGR
Type: TE
vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/19374bc6-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014